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University of Kansas
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Cognitive Psychology and French
Bachelor of Science and Arts, May 2004

**NASA Academy Research Project:
Adaptation to Overcome Adverse Visual
Effects of Small Head-Mounted Displays**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Robert Welch



Education:

I am a graduating senior at the University of Kansas, where I am completing degrees in Cognitive Psychology and French. This fall I will begin graduate study in psychology at Stanford, and plan to one day become a cognitive neuroscientist for NASA, in a university, or for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The interdisciplinary nature of cognitive neuroscience and the diversity of its applications make me very excited to attend the NASA Academy, whose research will continue to have profound affect on the field of cognitive neuroscience.

Experiences:

While at the University of Kansas my love for science has thrived from working in multiple labs, which have allowed me to explore various research topics. A graduate level psychology statistics course sparked in me a fascination for quantitative psychology, which led to a research project with Dr. Michael Finger. For Dr. Finger I provided programming support in FORTRAN and gained experience in grant-writing and technical authoring. I co-authored a paper, "Item factor loading estimation for dichotomous items via a new method for Phi correlation factor analyses" that Dr. Finger and I presented at a national conference. In addition, while taking the course "Brain and Behavior," I developed a passion for the brain, and how the brain enables the mind. This led me to work in multiple cognitive psychology/neuroscience labs. For instance, in Dr. Paul Atchley's lab, I learned basic concepts pertaining to visual search and attention. This experience informs me of my interest in attention and perception, which have been common themes in other projects I have initiated. In the continued pursuit of these interests, I am currently working with Dr. Joe Dien, who is well known for high-density electrophysiological studies of attention and emotion.

Extra-curricular Activities:

A dedicated gymnast, most of my childhood was spent upside down. My senior year of high school, I applied my gymnastic abilities to cheerleading and was featured on ESPN for winning two national championship titles in all-star cheerleading. In college, however, I suffered a severe athletic injury that ended my free pass into Kansas basketball games (the best part of cheerleading), but still love to watch ESPN cheerleading, and of course, the Jayhawks.

For the past couple of years my free time has been spent as a crisis counselor, a tutor, a court appointed special advocate for abused and neglected children, and a resident assistant. In addition, I enjoy dedicating time to the "Rilly Project," a school supplies drive for children in the foster care system that I founded. In the time that remains, I love to play chess with my father, perform as a voice-over artist for local commercials, and make outlandish short films with my wonderful husband, Josh.

